in Major Ports. Efforts are already on towards introduction of electronic data interchange (EDI) in the Port Sector.

Maintenance of Telecom Services in Tribal Areas of Andhra Pradesh

1119. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Prades Telecom has slackened efforts to properly maintain telecom services to tribal areas;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is frequent break-down in telecom services in tribal areas like Polavaram in West Godavari district; and

(d) steps propose to improve telecom services to such backward areas during 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. The Telecome Services in the areas have been working satisfactorily. However, in the month of May, 1996, the transmission link was distributed due to damage to antenna at Polavaram due to cyclone.

(d) The steps proposed to further improve the Telecom Services in the area during 1996-97 are as follows:—

i. It is planned to provide STD facilities to 7 more tribal stations.

ii. Old mechanical Exchanges are being phased out by Electronic exchanges.

iii. Open wire long distance media is being replaced by reliable microwave links.

iv. Out of 102 tribal villages in West Godawari District 34 villages have already been provided with telecom facilities. Efforts are being made to cover the rest in a phased manner.

Refusal to Accept Flood Donations from Indians

1120. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the Hindustan Times of January 14, 1996 to the effect that blood donations from Indians are bluntly refused in Sweden on grounds of congenital risk factor;

(b) if so, whether in any other European and developed countries blood donations by Indian donors are also refused on similar grounds of race, being carriers of congenital risk factors;

(c) if so, Government's information in this regard; and

(d) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir. However, the report is inaccurate. There is no legislation in Sweden which discriminates among donors on the basis of a congenital risk factors.

(b) and (c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Increasing Production of New Vehicles

1121. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been considerable increase in the production of all kinds of vehicles in the country during the past years and they are on the roads of the country;

(b) if so whether Government have formulated any comprehensive plan to improve and expand the roads keeping in view of the arrival of these new vehicles;

(c) if so, the comprehensive details thereof;

(d) whether any effective steps have also been taken in this direction during the past years; and